METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR ADAPTING A TRAINING PERIOD IN A TURBO DECODING DEVICE

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit of provisional U.S. Patent Application No. 60/259,059 filed December 29, 2000, to inventors Blankenship *et al.* (Attorney Docket No. CR00260M), herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to the field of communication systems. In particular, the present invention provides a method of tailoring a training period for use in turbo decoding based on the quality of the received signal and on the decoding iteration.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

In a communication system, channel coding schemes may typically be employed for error correction. For instance, turbo codes may be used for reliable communications over a wireless channel. A variety of methods may be employed to decode these channel coding schemes. For example, turbo codes are generally decoded using an iterative decoding technique. Some iterative decoding techniques process results from an underlying algorithm. For instance, a maximum *a posteriori* (MAP) algorithm, a variant such as the max-log-MAP or log-MAP, or a similar type of algorithm is generally used to decode a constituent code within a turbo code. The MAP algorithm may be referred to as a decoder. The results from the MAP algorithm, such as output log-likelihood ratios (LLRs), can then be used or modified for further decoding iterations. The MAP algorithm uses forward and backward recursions to update probability metrics and subsequently decode the constituent code. However, the MAP algorithm requires memory proportional to the frame size.

In some standards, the frame sizes may reach up to 20,728 bits. Because the memory requirements of the MAP algorithm are proportional to the frame size, the amount of memory necessary to implement the MAP algorithm is a serious concern. For example, for a frame size of 20,728 bits and an eight-state constituent code, 2.65 Mbits of memory is required.

To alleviate these memory requirements, windowing techniques are frequently employed. In conventional windowing techniques, a frame is divided into windows. The MAP algorithm is performed one window at a time and thus only requires an amount of memory proportional to the window size.

However, while memory requirements are reduced, these conventional windowing techniques may not produce results that are as reliable as those produced without windowing. The results are not as reliable because the initial conditions for the forward recursion at the beginning of the window or the backward recursion at the end of the window are unknown, and must be estimated through a training procedure. Training recursions are run forward from a time before the beginning of the window or backward from a time after the end of the window to obtain reliable metric values for the initial conditions at the beginning and end of the window. The training period is often set to 32 or more, which may provide acceptable performance degradation from the un-windowed MAP algorithm. Because the training is required for each window and the training period is the same for each window, an increase in the complexity of the windowing technique results. In some instances, the training period is equal to the window size. This doubles the complexity of a forward or backward recursion.

Because the training period is fixed over all signal-to-noise ratios (SNRs) and over all iterations, the training cost remains the same for poor channel conditions as for better conditions and for all decoding iterations.

It would be desirable therefore to provide a method of training in a turbo decoder that overcomes the above.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a schematic representation of an information burst that may be decoded in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a flow diagram of one embodiment of a method for processing a window in an information burst in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. 3 is a flow diagram of one embodiment of a subroutine of the method shown in **FIG. 2**; and

FIG. 4 is a schematic representation of one embodiment of a turbo decoding device that may be used in accordance with the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENTLY PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

FIG. 1 shows a schematic representation of an information burst that may be decoded in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention at **100**. The term "burst" appearing herein may refer to a short or isolated transmission, a portion of a longer transmission, a portion of a continuous transmission, a portion of a semi-continuous transmission, a time-limited transmission, a bandwidth-limited transmission, or any combination thereof.

Information burst **100** may include coded or uncoded source information. Information burst **100** comprises any suitable number of information bits. Information burst **100** may be transmitted from any suitable transmitting device to any suitable receiving device. For example, information burst **100** may be transmitted from a base station to a wireless cellular device. Alternatively, a cellular device may transmit information burst **100** to a base station.

In one embodiment of the invention, information burst **100** is intended to be decoded by an iterative algorithm that applies a forward-backward algorithm on a trellis. For example, the information burst **100** may be intended for a turbo decoder using a MAP algorithm, or another decoder using iterations and probability propagation.

As seen in **FIG. 1**, information burst **100** may be processed with one embodiment of the present invention. In the embodiment of **FIG. 1**, information burst **100** has a size of N_i symbols. For example, N_i can be 640 information bits. Information burst **100** may be divided into two or more windows **110**, **120**, and **130**. These windows may be of differing size. Alternatively, as seen in **FIG. 1**, the windows **110**, **120** and **130** may have the same size. Windows **110**, **120** and **130** may be three windows out of a large number of total windows depending, for example, on the size of the information burst. For example, in an embodiment where information burst **100** has a size of N_i=640 information bits, windows **110, 120, 130** could be three windows out of ten total windows, each containing 64 information bits.

Each window **110**, **120**, **130** of information burst **100** may be processed with an algorithm, such as, for example, a MAP algorithm. In one embodiment of the invention, a window management function controls the processing of each window. In general, the windows may be processed in any order. For example, in one embodiment, all windows are processed simultaneously in parallel. In another embodiment, the windows are processed from the front of information burst **100** to the back of the information burst **100** in sequential order. In yet another embodiment, the windows are processed from the back of information burst **100** to the front of information burst **100** in reverse sequential order.

In order to process a window **120** (e.g., window ***n***) with a MAP algorithm, the forward (α) recursion is initialized at the beginning of the window, and the backward (β) recursion is initialized at the end of the window. If the window management results in window **110** (e.g., window ***n*–1**) being processed before window **120** (e.g., window ***n***) is processed, window **120** (e.g., window ***n***) may initialize its forward recursion by copying the final value of the forward recursion of window **110** (e.g., window ***n*–1**). Similarly, if the window management function results in window **130** (e.g., window ***n*+1**) being processed before window **120** (e.g., window ***n***) is processed, window **120** (e.g., window ***n***) may initialize its backward recursion by copying the final value of the backward recursion for window **130** (e.g., window ***n*+1**). In

general, at least one of either the forward or the backward recursion initialization for window **120** (e.g., window ***n***) is unknown. In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, the unknown initialization is determined by a training recursion that starts outside of the selected window, where the training period depends on the window size, signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) or other signal quality measure, and decoding iteration number. For example, the training period may be non-decreasing with increasing SNR or increasing iteration number. In an embodiment where the windows are selected sequentially and training is only necessary for the backward recursion, the training period **122** (e.g., training period ***T***) for the β recursion for iteration **124** (e.g., iteration ***i***) will be less than or equal to the training period **126** (e.g., training period ***T***) for the β recursion for iteration **128** (e.g., iteration ***i*+1**).

FIG. 2 is a flow diagram of one embodiment of a method of processing a window in an information burst in accordance with the present invention at **200**. **A** indicates a period before the processing of a window such as, for example, window **120** (e.g., window ***n***) described above. During period **A**, a window adjacent to window **120** (e.g., window ***n***) such as, for example, window ***n*–1** or window ***n*+1** may be processed. Alternatively, during period **A**, an information burst may be divided into windows as described above where window **120** (e.g., window ***n***) is processed at the same time or before windows ***n*–1** and ***n*+1**.

At block **210**, a window is selected for processing. This window may be one of the windows **110**, **120**, **130** in information burst **100** as described above. In one embodiment of the invention, the window is processed using the MAP algorithm shown below:

$$L_k = \ln\frac{P(u_k = +1|\mathbf{y})}{P(u_k = -1|\mathbf{y})} = \ln\frac{\sum\limits_{\substack{(s',s)\\ u_k=+1}} p(s',s,\mathbf{y})}{\sum\limits_{\substack{(s',s)\\ u_k=-1}} p(s',s,\mathbf{y})} = \ln\frac{\sum\limits_{\substack{(s',s)\\ u_k=+1}} \alpha_{k-1}(s')\gamma_k(s',s)\beta_k(s)}{\sum\limits_{\substack{(s',s)\\ u_k=-1}} \alpha_{k-1}(s')\gamma_k(s',s)\beta_k(s)}$$

The quantity $p(s',s,\mathbf{y})$ may be the joint probability of the branch that goes from state s' to state s during the *k*th section of the code trellis and the entire received sequence **y** (e.g., information burst).

Because of the underlying Markov nature of the code, this probability may be broken up into a product of three probabilities: past $\alpha_{k-1}(s') = p(s',\mathbf{y}_{j<k})$, present $\gamma_k(s',s) = p(s,y_k \mid s')$, and future $\beta_k(s) = p(\mathbf{y}_{j>k} \mid s)$. The α and β probabilities may be calculated through generalized forward and backward recursions, respectively, on the code trellis, each of which involves sums of products of probabilities.

After selecting a window, the α probabilities (α's) for the beginning step and the β probabilities (β's) for the final step of the window may be initialized as seen at blocks **215**, **220**. Depending upon how the windows are processed, this may be done by copying metrics from adjacent windows or by training. The initialization in blocks **215** and **220** may be labeled variable α metric initialization and variable β metric initialization because, for any given window, one of either α metric initialization or β metric initialization may be determined through training, where the training period depends on both the SNR and the iteration number as described above.

In one embodiment of the invention, the initial α's are obtained through training at block **215**. In this embodiment, the final β's are obtained through training at block **220**. This embodiment may be used, for example, when all windows **110**, **120**, **130** are processed simultaneously in parallel.

In another embodiment of the invention, the initial α's are obtained by copying the final α's from the preceding window at block **215**. In this embodiment, the final β's are obtained through training at block **220**. This embodiment may be used, for example, when windows **110**, **120**, **130** are processed sequentially from the front to the back of the information burst **100**. For example, in **FIG. 1**, the initial α's for window **120** (e.g., window ***n***) are obtained by copying the final α's from window **110** (e.g., window ***n*–1**).

In yet another embodiment of the invention, the initial α's are obtained through training at block **215**. In this embodiment, the initial β's are obtained by copying the final β's from the succeeding window at block **220**. This embodiment may be used, for example, when windows **110**, **120**, **130** are

processed reverse sequentially from the back to the front of information burst **100**. For example, in **FIG. 1**, the initial β's for window **120** (e.g., window ***n***) are obtained by copying the final β's from window **130** (e.g., window ***n***+**1**).

In one embodiment of the invention, initialization at blocks **215** and **220** may occur as shown in **FIG. 2** (i.e., α's initialized then β's initialized). Alternatively, initialization may occur at block **220** followed by initialization at block **215** (i.e., β's initialized then α's initialized), or the initializations in block **215** and block **220** may occur at the same time.

At block **225**, the α's may be computed over the window. This step may be accomplished using any suitable method known in the art.

At block **230**, the β's may be computed over the window. This step may be accomplished using any suitable method known in the art.

In one embodiment of the invention, the step described at block **230** may occur before block **225**. Alternatively, the step described at block **230** may occur at the same time as block **225**.

At block **235**, the LLRs may be computed over the window. This step may be accomplished using any suitable method known in the art.

FIG. 3 shows a flow diagram of one embodiment of a subroutine in accordance with the present invention at **300**. The subroutine of **FIG. 3** may take place, for example, during either block **215** or block **220** in **FIG. 2**. The embodiment of **FIG. 3** may be, for example, a variable α or β metric initialization function specifying initialization in accordance with the present invention.

The variable metric initialization function **300** may occur for the variable α metric initialization **215** or the variable β metric initialization **220**. Decision blocks **307** enable function **300** to be valid for both α and β initializations. In one embodiment of the invention, the function **300** may be working to perform α initialization. In addition, variable metric initialization function **300** may indicate that initialization will occur by copying, for example, as indicated by decision block **305**. In this embodiment, the α's from the final step of the

preceding window will be copied as the initial α's for this window (at block **310**).

In another embodiment of the invention, the function **300** may be working to perform β initialization, as determined by decision block **307**, while the initialization will occur by copying, as determined by decision block **305**. In this embodiment, the β's from the beginning step of the succeeding window are copied as the initial β's for the current window (at block **320**).

The variable metric initialization function **300** may indicate that initialization will occur by training, as determined by decision block **305**. In this case, a training period ***T*** may be selected at block **315**. In accordance with the present invention, for a set window size, the training period may be a function of the signal quality and iteration. In one embodiment of the invention, the following function may be used to describe the training period:

$$T\left(\frac{E_b}{N_0}, i\right) = \begin{cases} \left\lceil \dfrac{(i-1)T_{max}}{I_{max}} \right\rceil, & 1 \le i \le I_{max} \\ T_{max}, & i > I_{max} \end{cases}$$

where E_b/N_0 is the signal-to-noise ratio per bit, ***i*** is the iteration number, and T_{max} and I_{max} are parameters dependent upon E_b/N_0. For iterations after iteration I_{max}, T_{max} is used as the training period. In a preferred embodiment, I_{max} is non-decreasing with increasing E_b/N_0, and T_{max} is non-decreasing with increasing iteration and E_b/N_0.

For example, in one embodiment of the present invention, the information burst size may be 640 bits and a window size of 32 steps may be used, thus resulting in 20 windows. In such a case, choosing

$$I_{max} = \left\lfloor 2\frac{E_b}{N_0} \right\rfloor + 2$$

and

$$T_{max} = \left\lceil 16\frac{E_b}{N_0} \right\rceil + 4,$$

where E_b/N_0 is expressed in dB, results in near-optimal performance. Previously, a fixed training period size has been used regardless of signal

quality and iteration. The present invention may achieve nearly the same decoding performance as previously used techniques. However, the present invention uses much shorter training periods and therefore less computational complexity than previous techniques.

Once the training period ***T*** is established at block **315**, the starting metrics for the training recursions (indicated at either block **325** or block **327**) may be set. This may be done using any suitable method known in the art. This may be done, for example, by setting the metric for each state to zero. Alternatively, the metric for each state may be set to some other fixed value or to random values. Alternatively, the metric for each state may be set to whatever happens to be in the memory locations in which the metrics are intended to be stored.

In one embodiment of the invention, as determined by decision block **307**, the training recursion for the α's may be started ***T*** steps from the beginning of the window (as seen at block **325**). Alternatively, the training recursion for the β's may be started ***T*** steps from the end of the window (as seen at block **327**).

Then, as determined by decision block **307**, at block **335**, an α recursion may be performed over the ***T*** steps prior to the initial step of the window up to the initial step of the window. Alternatively, at block **337**, a β recursion may be performed over the ***T*** steps following the final step of the window back to the final step of the window.

FIG. 4 shows a schematic representation of a turbo decoding system in accordance with the present invention at **400**. Turbo decoding system **400** may include at least one log-MAP decoder **410**. In the embodiment of **FIG. 4**, turbo decoding system **400** also includes a second log-MAP decoder **440**. Alternatively, MAP or MAP variants may be used instead of log-MAP decoders. Turbo decoding system **400** may also include an interleaver **430** and a de-interleaver **450**.

While specific embodiments of the present invention have been shown and described, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that the disclosed invention may be modified in numerous ways and may assume many

embodiments other than those specifically set out and described above. Accordingly, the scope of the invention is indicated in the appended claims, and all changes that come within the meaning and range of equivalents are intended to be embraced therein.